Strength of NIC

937. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present strength of National Informatics Centre (NIC);

(b) whether there is any proposal to expand it; and

(c) what are the functions of NIC as of now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The present strength of National Informatics Centre (NIC) is 3611.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) To provide e-governance network backbone and e-governance support to Central Government, State Governments/Union Territories, District Administrations and other Government bodies.

Encouragement to Foreign Investors

938. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign investors have not shown encouraging investments in Indian Telecom sector because of BSNL dictate in the sector;

(b) whether it is a fact that operators using GSM services attract more foreign investors than operators using CDMA services;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to encourage foreign investors to invest in CDMA technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Operators in GSM service have attracted more foreign equity than those in CDMA services.

(c) Since foreign investments in Telecom Sector is a market driven phenomenon depending on the investors, no specific reason can be given for the same.

(d) The Government Policy is neutral with regard to the use of a technology by the access services providers.

Interference on the role of TRAI on ADC

939. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been disputes between TRAI (regulator) and DoT (licensor) on the issue of Access Deficit Charges (ADC);

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that ADC related problems are being handled by TRAI as concept of ADC was introduced/reviewed by them; and

(d) if so, the reasons that DoT is interfering in the role of TRAI on ADC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the Government had sought comments of TRAI on proposed directions under Section 25 of TRAI Act 1997 on the issue of Access Deficit Charge.

(c) and (d) ADC was prescribed by TRAI in January, 2003 and implemented from Ist May, 2003.

As per the Government policy, access to telecommunications is of utmost importance for achievement of the country's social and economic goals. Availability of affordable and effective communications for the citizens is at the core of the vision and goal of the telecom policy.

The Access Deficit Charge arises out of tariff rebalancing exerice for providing affordable and effective communications to the citizen. Department of Telecommunications is responsible for formulation and implementation of telecommunication policies in the country and therefore DoT is not interfering with the role of TRAI on ADC.

Profit/Loss of MTNL

940. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that from January, 2006 telephone calls from North to South and East to West in the country shall be local calls;